



Office of Recovery

Office of Recovery Newsletter | September 17, 2021

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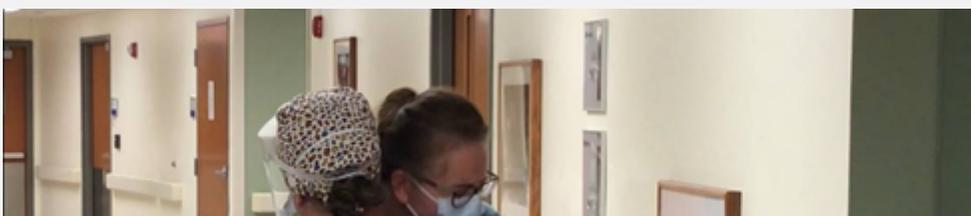
This week's edition of the Office of Recovery Newsletter highlights funding for frontline nurses and care workers, financial assistance for agricultural producers, and support for small businesses impacted by COVID-19. Our Community Impact section goes in depth about \$50 million available for hospitals to either provide premium pay or improve retention of nursing resources and support personnel, approved by the SPARK Executive Committee last week. Our Program Spotlight section highlights the Pandemic Response and Safety Grant, available for agricultural producers and distributors to recover costs incurred by the COVID-19 pandemic. This section also details new support for small businesses, administered by the Small Business Administration (SBA). For the latest informational resources available to Kansans, see the "Updates to Services and Support" section of this newsletter.

Last week, the SPARK Executive Committee also approved a structure for SPARK, with four advisory panels representing the four topic areas: economic revitalization, health and education, connectivity, and efficiency and modernization. The advisory panels will be composed of 8-10 experts.

For the most up-to-date information, please visit the Office of Recovery website at:

[covid.ks.gov](https://www.covid.ks.gov)

Program Spotlight





Governor Laura Kelly Announces Funding for Frontline Nurses and Care Workers

Last week, Governor Laura Kelly announced \$50 million available for hospitals to either provide premium pay or improve retention of nursing resources and support personnel, approved by the SPARK Executive Committee. This emergency funding will provide immediate support for Kansas hospitals to manage the current COVID-19 surge.

Qualified facilities may use the funding for either premium pay as defined in the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) or for funding a program designed by the facility to improve the retention of nursing resources and support personnel.

“Many of our nurses are risking their lives every day to save Kansans from COVID-19 – and the immense strain on our hospitals is causing them to be exhausted and disheartened,” **Governor Laura Kelly said.** “They’re taking on extra shifts and caring for more patients than they can handle – and it’s our responsibility to give them the support they need.

“Frontline nurses need this funding to continue battling the COVID-19 surge here at home. I sincerely thank all Kansas frontline nurses and health care workers for all they do to protect our communities from the threat of COVID-19. I encourage all Kansans to do their part and get vaccinated immediately – for our health care workers, for our businesses, and for our families.”

The funding can provide frontline nurses and care workers with premium pay by increasing their hourly wages up to \$13 per hour. Hospitals can apply for these State Fiscal Recovery Funds and receive funding based on their number of beds, and will have flexibility over how to distribute premium pay.

Additionally, hospitals will be allowed to propose a plan other than premium pay to retain staff if it meets compliance with ARPA guidance and is approved by the Office of Recovery. Funding in retention programs must be spent on pay and associated benefits of qualified employees. Funding in both premium pay and retention programs must be spent in a manner that is **additive** to existing pay and benefit programs in place as of August 31, 2021.

Governor Kelly believes it is imperative to act now and protect the health and safety of our frontline nurses. This funding will ensure that Kansas hospitals are

adequately equipped with experienced staff, rural hospitals can keep their doors open, and nurses can appropriately be compensated for their tireless and courageous work throughout this pandemic.

More information will be provided to eligible Kansas hospitals in the coming days about how to access and properly allocate this funding to their nurses and frontline care workers.



New Support for Small Businesses Impacted by COVID-19

The Small Business Administration (SBA) is strengthening the COVID Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program, which provides long-term, low-cost loans. This plan is aimed at helping more than 150,000 small businesses.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) will:

- Increase the maximum amount of funding a small business can borrow through this program from \$500,000 to \$2 million, which can be used to hire and retain employees, purchase inventory and equipment, and pay off higher-interest debt
 - SBA will ensure that no small business has to start repaying these loans until two years after they receive the funding
- Make it easier for small businesses with multiple locations in hard-hit sectors like restaurants, hotels and gyms to access these loans
- Offer a 30-day exclusive window of access where only small businesses seeking loans of \$500,000 or less will receive awards after the new and improved loan product launches
 - This is meant to ensure that Main Street businesses have additional time to access remaining funds

Stay tuned for additional information from both the SBA and the Office of Recovery.



Financial Assistance for Agricultural Producers and Distributors

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that it will soon publish a Request for Applications (RFA) for the Pandemic Response and Safety (PRS) Grant Program. The Pandemic Response and Safety (PRS) Grant Program provides funding to help small specialty crop producers, food processors, manufacturers, distributors and farmers markets recover costs incurred by responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, including for measures to protect workers. Funding for this program comes from [the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 \(Pub. L. No. 116—260\)](#).

Eligibility

The PRS Grant Program provides grants to food processors, distributors, and producers that meet SBA small business size standards and farmers markets. The three industries that can apply for the program are:

- Crop production
- Food manufacturing
- Merchant wholesalers, nondurable goods

Businesses in these industries are limited to size standards – click here for a [full list](#) of business types and size standards to determine eligibility.

Application Overview

Application Period Opens: September 23, 2021

Application Period Closes: 11:59 PM Eastern Time on November 8, 2021

To apply, a business must first check eligibility [here](#) and have a DUNS number. Once the application opens on September 23, businesses can apply [here](#).

All applications submitted before the deadline will be considered for funding. Applications will not be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis.

Allowable uses

Grants will cover activities associated with:

- **Workplace Safety:** Implementing workplace safety measures to protect against COVID-19
- **Market Pivots:** Implementing market pivots to protect against COVID–19
- **Retrofitting Facilities:** Retrofitting facilities for worker and consumer safety to protect against COVID–19
- **Transportation:** Providing additional transportation options to maintain social distancing and worker and consumer safety to protect against COVID-19
- **Worker Housing:** Providing worker housing that protects against COVID-19
- **Medical:** Providing health services to protect workers against COVID-19

The minimum funding request amount is \$1,500. The maximum funding request amount is \$20,000. No cost sharing or matching funds are required.

For questions about this program, please email usda.ams.prs@grantsolutions.gov or call (301) 238-5550. Help desk hours are Monday through Friday, from 8 am to 8 pm Central Time.

Updates to Services and Support



Webinars and Q&A Sessions

For additional support in spending and reporting federal relief funds, please consider attending a webinar or Q&A session hosted by the RO. Upcoming sessions include:

September 22: Grant Implementation: Administrative and Indirect Costs

Attend this presentation by the Office of Recovery to learn about administrative and indirect costs during the grant implementation process.

This webinar will take place Wednesday, September 22 at 11 AM CT. You can register for this webinar [here](#) and access recordings of past webinars on the [RO website](#).

To view the slides from the Office of Recovery's last webinar regarding how to report and prevent waste, fraud and abuse throughout the grant lifecycle, [click here](#). This webinar was held on September 8.

Office of Recovery Q&A Sessions

Join us for an opportunity to ask the Office of Recovery questions about applying for funds, guidance from Treasury, upcoming deadlines, and other topics.

These sessions will be held every Thursday at 1 PM CT. You can join the session by registering here: [Register for Q&A Session](#).

American Rescue Plan Act

- The latest version of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on ARPA can be found [here](#).
- Local Governments and State Agencies can find a checklist to use before spending ARPA funds [here](#).
- The Office of Recovery has also updated its website to include a [Compliance Resource Library](#), which is meant to assist state agencies, local governments, and other stakeholders with receiving, expending and reporting American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. A new job aid has been posted regarding public procurement – this job aid provides an introduction to the public procurement process, including definitions, policy, first steps, and procurement types and thresholds.

For the latest on how **2020 COVID Relief Funds** are spent, please visit [the Investment Dashboard](#). The Investment Dashboard has been updated with July 2021 data, showing Kansas has allocated \$1.004 billion and expended \$989 million in total CRF funds.

Contact the RO

The Office of Recovery is here to offer support and coordination, and you can submit a question or inquiry via the [Contact Us form](#). Please visit covid.ks.gov for up-to-date information and resources on recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic for Kansas residents, businesses, and communities.

(785) 368-8507

[Question/Request Form](#)

Warm Regards,

DeAngela Burns-Wallace, Ed.D. Secretary, Kansas Department of Administration

On behalf of the Office of Recovery, Kansas Governor Laura Kelly

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